

***Please forward this information to your principals and school councils!



KDE-mail

SBDM Council News

March 8, 2006

Welcome!

Division Director's Notes—Council of Councils

In this Division we strongly believe that the work you do with school councils in your district will have impact on students for years to come. Open communication between all stakeholders is a key to success with our charge of helping students reach proficiency and beyond. The task before us is very clear: we must close achievement gaps and increase student achievement. No matter where your schools are and what your test scores now, more can be done. There is plenty of work for everyone.

One tested and very successful best practice for council-district communication is to begin a "Council of Councils" for the school district. The superintendent, in most cases, hosts this meeting, and meets with council members for one hour each month to discuss items of interest regarding school improvement and governance. Meetings could be at the board office or could rotate into each school throughout the district. When a school hosts the meeting, the principal is co-host. The agenda usually follows the rhythm of the school year. For example, this time of year the meeting might be about school council allocations or planning. Membership usually includes one parent and one teacher member designated from each council in the district, one board member designated by the board, and all principals. All board members are usually invited to attend meetings, especially those that occur in their district within the county. Council and board members are invited to suggest agenda items. Speakers are often invited to address topics of interest to the group. There is no law or rule about how to set up the group, but meeting procedures used by the board and councils in their meetings are appropriate and can be used.

Brady Link, Graves County Superintendent, puts it this way: "I think it's important for a district's site-based councils to work together because so many issues that face one council actually face them all at some point. They can benefit from one another's experiences and different perspectives. In the end, a council of councils can really contribute to making the best decisions, encouraging the best practices, and improving both school culture and academic achievement." Call staff in the Council Development and Planning Branch for information and support, and, please, don't hesitate to call on KDE staff for specific information for the meetings. This is a best-practice strategy that is definitely worth a try!



@ KDE:

Orin.Simmerman@education.ky.gov

Cheri.Meadows@education.ky.gov

Judith.Littleton@education.ky.gov

Erin.McGee@education.ky.gov

Becoming an Endorsed SBDM Trainer

The Kentucky Association of School Councils (KASC) is currently accepting registration for the SBDM Trainers' Institutes to be held this year. Institutes will take place in Richmond on May 1-2, Bowling Green on May 8-9, and Lexington on July 17-18. For more information, please contact Lois Quilligan (KASC) at training@kasc.net or 859-238-2188.

[KASC website](#)

Question of the Month

Q: Is it all right to have the public meet principal candidates as part of a special school council meeting?

A: This is up to the individual school, based upon the council's approved principal selection policy.

However, there are a variety of laws regarding what questions candidates can be asked, and since this is a situation where potential interviewees may be asked questions by the public about issues such as marital status, children, race/ethnicity, religion, etc., it is incumbent upon the council to protect the privacy of each of the individuals. School councils should be aware of all liability issues in this situation. Council members receive training regarding what they can and cannot ask candidates in an interview, but of course the public at large does not have access to that same training and information about the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Act laws.

In addition, an individual applicant may not wish to go public at this stage, as their current employer may not know that they are interviewing, and the person does have the right not to disclose that information publicly. It could cause a very awkward situation for them in their current position. The council could lose out on potential high quality applicants by insisting on a public meeting as an extension of the interview process.

It is appropriate to have a public meeting to introduce the new principal once the person has accepted the position and signed a contract.

If you would like to discuss the issue further, you can contact anyone in the Council Development and Planning branch at 502-564-4201.

